

Paul, with the military having been at the forefront of increasing diversity, in particular with the Tuskegee airmen initiative, and you coming from the military, what lessons have you learned personally on your everyday job for the BLM.

>> P. Stout: Well, the great philosopher and poet George Santiana said it best, "Those who do not study their history are doomed to repeat it." and the lessons that I've learned are invaluable from my days growing up at O'Hare with quite a few Vietnam veterans that I had the opportunity to speak to.

Vietnam veterans that are probably watching right now that ask nothing of us but gave everything of themselves to us.

So as I learn that lesson as a young child and growing up, I was very, very encouraged to embrace diversity and inclusiveness in our country.

Leon.

>> L. Thomas: Thanks, Paul.

We have a question from Bonnie Wood that was e-mailed into us, and starts off with a

compliment.

Thank you, Bonnie it says: interesting program.

I hope other states are also taking advantage of these programs in social funding.

Her question is about programs for our returning veterans, especially those wounded and displaced.

What partnerships has BLM established to make hiring of veterans easier and possible?

Are there training avenues for these veterans and special funding to encourage managers to hire this brave -- these brave and dedicated Americans?

Pam?

>> P. McNeil: Yes, thanks for the question,

Bonnie.

We have actually partnered with a program called Vets Success and at the Arizona State Office we currently have at least two, maybe three individuals that have come onboard with that Vets Success program, and initially they are funded through the program and they are receiving training from us, and it's been very successful, and we definitely look forward to bringing more of those individuals onboard.

It is really an easy recruitment strategy because

they have a pool of applicants and they're able to give us different resumes and conduct that interview process to bring those individuals onboard and give them that opportunity to apply their skills with BLM.

>> L. Thomas: Thank you, Pam.

I'm going to direct these questions to you, Tim, at least this one.

Great ideas have been presented on recruitment.

This comes from -- looks like it's from the Hot Mail account, last name Chandler.

Great ideas have been presented in terms of recruitment.

How are these programs to benefit -- let me rephrase that, Tim.

I'm sorry.

Great ideas in of recruitment.

How are these programs to benefit those already onboard to get into management programs, especially leadership, supervision.

And the second question: how are we qualifying the results of the inclusiveness programs in our management and leadership and supervision levels of our organization?

>> T. Murphy: Two good questions.

Let's see if I'm reading them right, Leon.

On inclusiveness, diversity and how does that enhance or affect those already onboard...

As I said earlier, when we have an inclusive workplace, when we have the ideas that people bring in that are different than our own, the ability for a manager to make a decision is exponentially improved.

The ability of co-workers to identify strategies, deal with resource challenges, administrative issues, again, immensely enhanced.

We get out of the group think immediately when we have an inclusive, diverse workforce.

So I offer that.

It becomes a dynamic just exhilarating place to be.

I think Mary said it earlier, if we were all the same, had all same opinions, it would be a pretty bland existence day to day, and when we expand that diversity, it becomes very exciting and our achievements are certainly improved.

Quantification...

I don't believe we currently have a tracking

mechanism for this.

We're now opening the door to these discussions on inclusiveness.

We're sharing our ideas and opinions of what it means.

I'll go back to one of my foundations, which is mentioned earlier...

Developing an inclusive workplace is absolute foundation, an absolute critical foundation for not only building diversity, and that is beyond race and gender and age, but opinion within those groups varies as well.

Building a diverse workforce and then maintaining that diverse workforce absolutely depends on inclusiveness.

We'll be seeing achievements as we do that.

Thank you.

>> L. Thomas: This next question can be for Ray or Tim, whoever jumps in first.

How are diversity measures being communicated down the chain from the upper leadership.

>> R. Suazo: I can take that one, in Arizona, I'll speak for what we're doing, one of the things we

did as a leadership team was to commit to the goals through our DIART and to also through our EPAP system to identify a goal under the employee viewpoint survey development of an action plan that supports goals to ensure we're paying attention to diversity and inclusion.

We certainly talk to our managers and hold them accountable.

We want to continue to have goals that are forward-thinking.

You've heard about our Diversity Change Agents, our DIART team, and then our subteam that actually is spread out throughout the state and focuses on bringing in that difference in thought and, you know, difference in perspective that makes us come together as a whole.

I think it's more than just the leadership level when you get that suborganization to understand and focus what your goals are, they can start to message to the workforce the importance of diversity and inclusion.

>> L. Thomas: Thank you, Ray.

Thank you all for the great questions of both faxes and text messages.

So we're using technology here.

Thank you very much.

I have another question for you, Ray.

As a leader in the BLM, how can you ensure diversity and inclusion programs remain relevant?

>> R. Suazo: Thanks, Leon.

You heard a little bit a moment ago.

I think it's really a commitment at the leadership level to identify the importance of diversity and inclusion and setting up a framework either through accountability in our -- you know, evaluation systems or through -- as a leadership team to recognize that what we bring to the table is important.

Think about our mission in the BLM.

It's very diverse.

I've never worked for an organization like this where we do so many different things.

I mean, we are administrators.

We are land managers.

We provide multiple of resources to this country.

If we don't have a diverse workforce that supports that and a diversity and thought, how can we provide relevant product to the public?

So it's really bringing that together and understanding that as diverse as our public is, it's important for the BLM to also be diverse so that we can deliver great customer service.

>> L. Thomas: Ray, now do we create an atmosphere of inclusiveness within the BLM where we are geographically separated the way we are.

>> R. Suazo: Interestingly enough, I think this is a great forum.

But one of the other things we need to do is make it a point of committing to webinars or conference calls and then the subteams that we -- we're talking about putting together -- the one I described in Arizona, we've got participation from a number of district offices, and it's when you are sharing the information beyond the State Office and to those local offices that you get that collective think about what's important.

And what we want is not for -- our message and our goal is to go down and never bring anything back up to us.

We want the teams in the field to share their thoughts and ideas about how we can improve upon



our diversity and inclusiveness.

So it's really that communication channel through our teams and down to the ground level.

>> L. Thomas: Arizona has an outstanding mentoring program.

Can either Pam or Ray talk to the success of the program and some of the elements involved in it?

>> P. McNeil: Sure.

We do have a formal mentoring program and I'm actually a part of the mentoring program this year, and it's an excellent program in that it allows BLM employees to transfer that knowledge and that experience to employees that haven't been here maybe as long, and I think it's probably a really good form of succession planning.

I think we're looking ahead.

I think that it's very leading edge that we're doing.

It's a benefit to the mentor as well as the mentee.

I believe the program has been going on for four or five years.

We have made kind of a pilot program, I believe,

where we're trying to make sure we're being consistent BLM-wide so that all states have that opportunity available to their employees to have that mentor-mentee relationship program so we can build upon our current skills and make our agency a premier agency.